

**Note of Local Meeting**  
**St. Winifred's Roman Catholic School, Newstead Road**  
**SE12 0SY**



**7.40pm, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015**  
**Trinity Hall, Taunton Road**

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### **Applications details**

**Reference: DC/15/91968**

**Proposal:** The expansion of St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School, 26 Newstead Road, SE12 to provide two forms of entry, comprising of the removal of existing trees and construction of a single storey foundation block incorporating nursery and reception classes with separate pedestrian access and the construction of a two storey entrance block incorporating administration rooms, a hall and new main entrance in place of the existing car park fronting Newstead Road and the construction of a two storey classroom building to the rear of the site, together with alterations to the existing building, the creation of 8 new car parking spaces and associated landscaping works

### **Attendance**

Councillor Jim Mallory (Chair)  
Margaret Brightman (London Borough of Lewisham (Applicant))  
Ben Whitehead (Architect)  
Paul Silcock (Transport Consultant)  
Luke Mannix (Planning Officer)

28 local residents (signed attendance sheet)

### **Note of Meeting**

#### Introduction

Councillor Mallory (Cllr Mallory) explained the reason for holding a meeting stating that it was an opportunity for those attending to listen to a presentation by the applicant, seek clarification on elements of the proposals and provide comments on points of concern.

#### Applicant's Presentation

Margaret Brightman (MB) provided an introduction to the education aims of the Council and background to the need for school places. The main points were as follows:

- The Borough has seen an increase in birth rates with a younger population placing strain on school places. In 2010, demand was higher than the number of places and this has led to a number of schools taking on bulge classes, including St. Winifred's.
- In line with this demand, the Council is looking to increase school spaces through expansion programs with popular and successful schools prioritised.
- Most of these expansions have been undertaken in community schools as opposed to schools of faith. 2 years ago, St Winifred's agreed to increase student intake and as a result LBL have begun to explore the potential of enlargement.
- The junior school and infant school are located on two different sites leading to difficulty of parents travelling with two children, as well as transport safety. Thus the exploration of amalgamation.
- The infant school on Effringham Road is not capable of incorporating the expansion.
- Therefore the current proposal on Newstead Road was taken forward.

**Q1:** What will happen to the school on Effringham Road?

**MB:** The expansion could lead to the sale of the site with proceeds going towards further improvements of the Borough's schools. Any future change would be subject to planning policy.

#### Architect's Presentation

Ben Whitehead (BW) provided background to the existing development and the constraints and an introduction to the proposed development. The main points were as follows:

- The site has an existing development centred in the middle of the site with playspace around the edges. This leads to a tricky site to develop.
- The brief was to utilise the space whilst protecting and enhancing existing areas of open play.
- Three new blocks are now proposed: classroom block to the rear, an infant block and administration/hall to the front.
- The development attempts to bring administration and visitor entrance to the front as opposed to the confusing current entrance shared with the pupils.
- The classroom block to the rear attempted to retain the same building line as the existing two storey buildings.
- A consultation event was held in April 2015 with some changes made in line with the comments.

**Q2:** I live directly opposite the school on Newstead Road. Will the proposed brick wall to the front be single storey in height?

**BW:** Yes.

**Q3:** Could this lead to graffiti or a prison feel within the school?

**BW:** The principle of the wall has been discussed with planning officers and the Design Review Panel, who were supportive of the wall. Therefore the

current design has been brought forward. If graffiti does occur, then the school would be responsible for the cleaning.

**Q4:** What about the height of the administration building? Could the building not be set back to be more in line with the existing development?

**BW:** The building would be two storey, however it could not be set back from the boundary as it would conflict with the existing buildings.

**Q5:** Why has the caretaker unit remained? Will this be developed in the future?

**BW:** Developing the caretaker unit was not part of the brief.

**MB:** When the brief was developed, the need for the retention of the caretaker unit was strong and the budget did not allow for a new flat. There are no plans for the redevelopment in the future at this stage.

**Q6:** I live in Dallinger Road. The existing single storey building has an impact on the level of light into gardens and therefore the two storey building would have a greater effect. Why not a single storey classroom?

**BW:** A single storey classroom was explored on both sides of the existing building to the rear, however this option would take up too much space and reduce open amenity.

**Q7:** The working plan did have two single storeys as shown in the consultation period. The relationship of the building should not outweigh existing residential amenity.

**BW:** This isn't true. The option that was shown at the consultation was a two storey building similar to that proposed. The separation of the classroom is not functional and reduces space.

**Q8:** Can the classroom building not be moved further south?

**BW:** There is a tree to the south which has a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)<sup>1</sup> and it was considered worthy of retention.

**Q9:** Lewisham's Residential SPD states that buildings should not be visually intrusive. The proposed classroom block with no windows would be intrusive to the amenity of the residents backing onto the site.

**BW:** Windows are added onto the northern elevation to break up the massing.

**Q10:** Why have no other options been explored?

**BW:** Options have been explored as outlined in the supporting documents. This option is considered to be the most appropriate taking into account the constraints of the site.

**Q11:** The proposed classroom building would completely block out light to the rear gardens making them useless. The requirements of the tree should not overcome residential amenity. If this tree is protected, why are the trees to the front not protected?

**BW:** I cannot answer that

**Q12:** What would be the implication of moving the classroom to the area of open ground currently covered in tarmac?

**BW:** This would fragment the current play area, significantly impacting on the children's outdoor learning and play.

**Q13:** Would a building where the orchard is proposed be better?

**BW:** The orchard has been proposed for its ecological benefits and amenity space for pupils. This space is already important for amenity. Also, any building would be quite close to the adjoining property which may have greater impacts on amenities to this building.

**Q14:** Most schools in London do not have that much amount of space or an orchard. Is it necessary?

**MB:** Orchards and ecological enhancements in general are encouraged in new school development to increase trees and allow outdoor learning.

**Q15:** Could you clarify the new entrances?

**BW:** The formation and administration building provides two new entrances to the school. An assembly point is located in the formation building as well as to the rear of the block.

**Q16:** How many students would be at the school?

**MB:** 420 pupils plus a nursery.

**MB:** This meeting has been brought forward with the intention of getting issues out and now we will go back with the intention of considering changes and providing further information.

**Cllr Mallory:** I will also follow up on this.

#### Transport Consultant's Presentation

Paul Silcock (PS) provided an introduction to the transport impacts and assessment. The main points were as follows:

- The proposed expansion would increase the pupils in phases. 415 pupils and 70 staff are expected in 2016 with a maximum of 460 pupils and 80 staff in 2019.
- This includes a nursery made of morning and afternoon sessions of 20 children.
- There is a possibility of adopting a staggered school start.
- Staff parking is reduced. 75 cycle and scooter parking spaces.
- A hands up travel survey was conducted in 2012. Results were used to estimate existing trip generated and, using the same analysis, the expected increase in parking required can be calculated to assess the parking required.

**Cllr Mallory:** Is there staff car sharing? Does the figures show this?

**PS:** Yes but the figures have not taken this into account. The figures are a worst case scenario and even in this instance, there is available space for

parents to park. The assessment also assumes the measures of the travel plan to increase sustainable modes of transport have been implemented.

**Q17:** Does the nursery impact on the assessment given they would start later?

**PS:** These numbers have been included in the figures.

**Q18:** Is there ways in which travel can be managed to minimise need for parking?

**PS:** Measures will be included in a travel plan.

**Cllr Mallory:** Will they be taken to committee?

**PS:** These could be placed in a travel plan. The school does have an existing travel plan with measures.

**Q19:** Do you have any idea of the area for student intake?

**PS:** The furthest students are 2km away, however this is only two students. The remaining students live locally with the majority using sustainable modes of transport.

**Q20:** Would a staggered start to school help parking as people wait?

**PS:** This could be made to work but it comes down to management should it be incorporated. The observations of the street shows parking can be incorporated without a staggered start. In addition, whilst the street is in reality a quite residential street, traffic calming devices could be implemented on the corner of Birch Grove.

**Q21:** The surrounding roads are used as diversions from the South Circular leading to dangerous driving. Could the road be made one-way.

**PS:** Perhaps. However traffic could travel faster through one-way as opposed to two-way so the benefits would not be great.

**Q22:** Residents and parents parking unlawfully within the spaces of Newstead Estate and on the restricted parking zones has been a problem in the past. How is this being addressed?

**PS:** The assessment shows there is sufficient space in the surrounding street networks without the need to park illegally. It would be down to the school to appropriately manage parking through the transport plan to persuade parents and staff to be considerate when parking.

**Q23:** Streets to the north are located in a CPZ which restricts parking in these areas. Would the loss of staff car park impact on parking taking this into account?

**PS:** There is parking restrictions further north and on Newstead Road. However there is available space further from the school as shown on the parking survey. As such it is not expected to significantly impact provided staff are encouraged to park further away from the school.

**Cllr Mallory:** There is an issue with parking with residents who don't want to pay using controlled parking zones. This can be brought forward outside of this local meeting and the issue can be taken up separately.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm.

1      *It was later noted that there are no TPO's on any tree on the site.*